

VZCZCXRO6091  
OO RUEHCHI RUEHCN RUEHDT RUEHHM  
DE RUEHBY #1782/01 3532300  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
O 192300Z DEC 07  
FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8748  
INFO RUEHXS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS  
RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD 0263  
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 0200  
RUEHGO/AMEMBASSY RANGOON 2538  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 2878  
RUEHBN/AMCONSUL MELBOURNE 4817  
RUEHPT/AMCONSUL PERTH 3107  
RUEHDN/AMCONSUL SYDNEY 2999  
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI  
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 0721

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CANBERRA 001782

SIPDIS

NOFORN  
SIPDIS

DEPT FOR P, EAP, SCA, NEA, OES, ISN, G

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/03/2017  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [AS](#) [MARR](#)  
SUBJECT: U/S BURNS' 12/4 MEETING WITH AUSTRALIAN DFAT  
SECRETARY L'ESTRANGE

SIPDIS

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Daniel A. Clune for reasons 1.4 (b and d)

-----  
SUMMARY  
-----

¶1. (C/NF) Summary: In a December 4, 2007 meeting in Australia, Under Secretary Burns and DFAT Secretary L'Estrange agreed the election of a new Australian government would not affect the strength of our alliance, but underlined the urgency to identify a new date for the Australia-U.S. Ministerial Talks (AUSMIN) in the first quarter of 2008. They noted the need for increased international engagement on both military and development assistance to Afghanistan, and agreed strengthening UN efforts to resolve the situation in Burma remains a high priority. L'Estrange and Burns expressed satisfaction with the agenda for the December 5 Trilateral Strategic Dialogue (TSD) Senior Officials' Meeting, noting progress towards operationalizing TSD initiatives and the need to continue bringing Japan along. On Iran, L'Estrange confirmed he had received a briefing on the classified version of the recent NIE on Iran and supported a third UNSCR. On India, L'Estrange highlighted the potential issue of the new government's position on Nuclear Supplier Group approval of India's civ-nuke deal. End summary.

¶2. (C) L'Estrange cited Iraq and Climate Change as the major policy differences of the new Australian government, but emphasized the strong, deep elements of continuity on most issues, such as Afghanistan, counterterrorism, Pacific Islands, and Asian Regional Architecture. The new government was strongly committed to the TSD, though it might wish to pursue some new issues within the framework. U/S Burns reiterated the importance of the Australian alliance to the U.S., shown by the early calls made by the President and the Secretary to Rudd and Smith. U/S Burns stated the United

SIPDIS

States would not publicly criticize the Rudd government's decision to withdraw combat troops from Iraq in mid-2008, and looked forward to consulting with Defence Minister Fitzgibbon and Foreign Minister Smith on this issue and ways which

Australia could continue to contribute, including in the training mission. Regarding climate change, Burns said we shared the belief that the post-2012 framework needed to include China and India, involve new technologies, and a pro-growth approach.

¶3. (C) U/S Burns briefed L'Estrange on the necessity of changing the date for AUSMIN, although both the Secretaries of State and Defense want to come to Australia. We would propose a new date after coordination with the Pentagon. L'Estrange said the new Australian FM is planning to hold AUSMIN in Canberra.

¶4. (C) L'Estrange assured Burns there was strong bipartisan support in Australia for efforts in Afghanistan, with the Rudd government committed to the long-term outcome. However, he said, the Australians were concerned about the steadfastness of the international community's commitment, both in terms of military presence and development assistance. U/S Burns informed L'Estrange we recommended that UNSYG Ban appoint Paddy Ashdown as envoy to Afghanistan in order to encourage greater assistance to Afghanistan, coordinate a single, harmonized international strategy, and coordinate a single, harmonized international strategy, and more closely cooperate and coordinate civilian activities with the military. L'Estrange agreed Ashdown was very articulate, persuasive, and a good choice for such a role.

¶5. (C) U/S Burns emphasized the importance the U.S. placed on gaining Nuclear Supplier Group (NSG) approval for sales of reactor technology and fuel to India as part of the civ-nuke deal; this was a high priority for the U.S. L'Estrange noted that new FM Smith was from western Australia and wished to boost ties with India to a new level, but said the Labor government's campaign positions on not selling uranium to India as a non-signatory to the NPT could complicate the NSG diplomacy.

CANBERRA 00001782 002 OF 002

¶6. (C) L'Estrange noted U.S. support for Gambari's mission in Burma and confirmed Australia had tried, unsuccessfully, to get the EAS and ASEAN to engage on the issue in late November summits in Singapore. L'Estrange suggested the UNSC and UNSYG would need to become more involved on the issue as Gambari lost steam. Burns said Singaporean views on Burma in December 3 had underwhelmed him; both agreed China appeared to be the only party with real leverage with the Burmese regime at this point.

¶7. (U) U/S Burns cleared this message.

CLUNE